

HUMAN RESOURCES POLICY

Fauquier County, Virginia

Policy Title: Employee Performance Evaluation
Section No. 17

Effective Date: 06/17/02
Supersedes Policy: 04/16/01

I. Purpose

It is the objective of the Board of Supervisors that the general government performance evaluation system provides for the establishment and communication of performance expectations and for the evaluation of employee work performance.

II. Scope

This policy applies to all permanent full-time and permanent part-time employees.

III. Definitions

A. Interim Performance Evaluation

An interim performance evaluation is defined as an informal evaluation prepared on an as-needed basis, distinct from the official annual performance evaluation, that indicates an employee's progress towards meeting his/her performance expectations.

B. Key Job Elements

Key job elements are defined as characteristics of work behavior that contribute to an employee's job performance, as set forth in the Fauquier County General Government Performance Evaluation Form.

C. Performance Evaluation

Performance evaluation is defined as the official annual determination of the degree to which an employee has met his/her performance expectations, as indicated on the Fauquier County General Government Performance Evaluation Form.

D. Performance Cycle

The performance cycle is defined as the period from July 1 through June 30 of each calendar year, during which an employee's performance is evaluated.

E. Performance Standards

Performance standards are defined as levels of proficiency at which each key job element should be executed during the evaluation period.

F. Performance Evaluation Form

The performance evaluation form is defined as the official Fauquier County General Government Performance Evaluation Form used to evaluate the performance of employees.

G. Reviewer

The reviewer is defined as the supervisor of an employee's immediate supervisor, or anyone else designated to review an employee's performance evaluation.

IV. **PROCEDURES**

A. Evaluation Forms

1. The official Fauquier County General Government Performance Evaluation Form shall be used in evaluating the performance of employees.
2. Specialized forms may be developed by Department Heads/Constitutional Officers as needed. Specialized forms must be reviewed by the Human Resources Department and approved by the County Administrator prior to use.

B. Timing Of Evaluations

1. Annual Evaluations
 - a. Employees shall be evaluated annually, using the official Fauquier County General Government Performance Evaluation Form, for the performance cycle July 1 through June 30 of each year.
 - b. Based upon extenuating circumstances, with prior approval of the reviewing supervisor and concurrence of the Human Resources Director, the immediate supervisor may postpone an employee's evaluation for a period not to exceed ninety (90) days. The employee must be advised in writing of the reason for the postponement, and the date that the evaluation will be completed.

2. Interim Evaluations

- a. Interim evaluations may be conducted at any time during the performance cycle to:

advise an employee of his or her progress toward meeting performance expectations during the probationary or the performance cycle;

obtain an evaluation from a supervisor who departs during an employee's performance cycle;

provide documentation in support of a disciplinary action.

- b. New and/or recently promoted, demoted or transferred employees shall receive an interim evaluation after three (3) months of employment in their positions.

- c. Interim evaluations must be supported by appropriate documentation.

C. Review Of Performance Expectations And The Performance Evaluation Form

1. Employees Entering A New Position

Supervisors should review performance expectations and the Performance Evaluation Form with any new employee or employee who has been promoted, demoted, or transferred to a new position within thirty (30) days of the employee's beginning the position.

2. Current Employees

For employees other than those described in section IV.C.1. above, a supervisor should review performance expectations for the coming year and the Performance Evaluation Form within thirty (30) days of an employee's receiving his or her annual performance evaluation for the most recent prior performance cycle.

D. Supervisor, Reviewer, And Employee Responsibilities

1. Supervisors have the responsibility to:

- a. prepare the Performance Evaluation Form;

- b. provide the reviewer with the opportunity to review the evaluation form before discussing the evaluation with the employee;
- c. establish specific performance improvement goals and a timetable for achievement of those goals for any employee who receives a rating below “Meets Standards” in two or more functional areas;
- d. provide follow up reviews and documentation of progress toward improvement goals;
- e. forward completed performance evaluations to the Department of Human Resources;
- f. complete a performance evaluation for each subordinate who has not received an evaluation within the previous ninety (90) days prior to departure (applies to supervisors who are leaving their positions during the performance cycle).

2. Reviewer Responsibility

Reviewers have the responsibility to:

- a. provide performance evaluation training to recently promoted or newly hired supervisors;
- b. if desired, review the evaluation form and key job elements before the evaluator discusses the completed evaluation with the employee;
- c. sign the evaluation form after the evaluator has discussed the evaluation with the employee.

3. Employee Responsibilities

Employees have the responsibility to:

- a. actively participate with the supervisor in the setting of individual goals for the upcoming evaluation period.
- b. advise the supervisor of any factors or circumstances which the employee believes should be considered in evaluating his/her performance.

E. Employee Transfers

Employees who transfer during the performance cycle shall be jointly evaluated by the prior and current supervisors. Consideration will be given to the employee's length of time and responsibilities under each supervisor when evaluating performance.

F. Performance Evaluation Form Components

1. Key Job Elements

All performance evaluations forms shall identify key job elements on which employees shall be evaluated.

2. Performance Standards

Performance standards shall be established for each identified key job element at the fully successful level. In setting standards, supervisors shall consider how performance will be measured (i.e., based on cost, timeliness, quality, quantity, accuracy, work behaviors, etc.).

3. Rating Levels

The Employee Performance Evaluation Form shall provide for selection of one of the following six (6) performance levels:

Outstanding – performance is characterized by exceptionally high quality and quantity of work which consistently exceeds all expectations and objectives;

Exceeds Standards – performance is characterized by high quality and quantity of work which exceeds expectations and objectives;

Meets Standards – performance meets the full expectations of the position;

Fair – performance is moderately below the requirements for the position and must be improved;

Needs Improvement – performance falls below the requirements for the job position and must be improved;

Unacceptable – employee does not meet the performance standards established for his/her job.

G. Overall Performance Ratings and Performance Improvement Plans

1. “Fair” Overall Performance Rating

For employees receiving an overall performance rating of “Fair,” counseling and a Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) detailing specific performance improvement goals and a timetable for achieving those goals are recommended.

2. “Needs Improvement” Overall Performance Rating

For employees receiving an overall performance rating of “Needs Improvement,” counseling and a Performance Improvement Plan must be implemented.

3. “Unacceptable” Overall Performance Rating

For employees receiving an overall performance rating of “Unacceptable,” counseling and a Performance Improvement Plan must be implemented.

H. Stipulations of Performance Improvement Plans

1. Performance Improvement Plans shall be developed by the employee’s immediate supervisor, in consultation with the evaluator’s immediate supervisor and the Human Resources Director, or designee, and shall detail specific performance improvement goals and a timetable for achieving those goals.
2. The PIP shall be submitted to the Human Resources Department with the completed performance evaluation. The supervisor shall counsel and review the PIP with the employee prior to the plan submission to the Human Resources Department.
3. Supervisors shall provide timely review and follow-up to the employee during the period of the PIP and maintain appropriate documentation.
4. Employees shall receive a formal evaluation, completed on the official Fauquier County General Government Performance Evaluation Form, at the end of the assigned time period of the PIP.
5. An overall performance rating of “Needs Improvement” or “Unacceptable” at the end of the assigned time period of the PIP and/or a failure to meet PIP goals and timelines may result in termination.

I. Employee Rights

1. Evaluation of performance is not grievable under the general government Grievance Procedure.
2. The content of key job elements and performance standards is not grievable under the County Grievance Procedure.
3. An employee may reply in writing to the evaluator after the evaluation has been discussed with him/her. The written response shall be forwarded to the second level supervisor for review, and shall become part of the employee personnel record.

J. Pay Allocation Based on Performance

1. An employee may be eligible to receive a merit increase based upon his/her overall job performance rating.
2. In order for an employee to be eligible to receive an "Outstanding" merit increase, the Department Head/Constitutional Officer must submit a formal, written request to the County Administrator.
 - a. The request must provide documentation justifying the "Outstanding" merit increase. The documentation shall be in addition to the performance evaluation. The Department Head/Constitutional Officer may be required to present the justification in a formal meeting with the County Administrator.
 - b. Up to 20% of the total number of permanent employees within the general government may receive an "Outstanding" merit increase contingent upon the approval of the County Administrator and the availability of funds.
3. An employee whose merit increase causes his/her salary to exceed the range maximum shall be paid at the new salary level (above the salary range).
4. All merit increases shall be awarded contingent upon the availability of funds. While budget limitations may require adjustments of proposed merit pay increases, such limitations shall not influence the evaluation rating given to an employee.

K. Probationary Employees

1. New Hires

- a. A newly hired employee who has not completed a minimum of six (6) months of service by July 1 (probationary employee) shall not be eligible to receive a merit increase in conjunction with the performance cycle. Such an employee may receive an increase equivalent to that associated with an overall performance rating of "Meets Standards". This increase shall be effective July 1 of the performance cycle year.
- b. For those employees that serve a twelve (12) month probationary period, completion of six (6) months of service by July 1 shall render the employee eligible to receive a merit increase.

2. Promotions

Upon promotion within any county government department, a permanent status employee who is required to complete a new probationary period, and who has received an overall job performance rating of at least "Meets Standards", shall be eligible to receive a merit increase on July 1.

3. Lateral Transfers

Upon lateral transfer within any county government department, a permanent status employee who is required to complete a new probationary period, and who has received an overall job performance rating of at least "Meets Standards", shall be eligible to receive a merit increase July 1.

4. Demotion

Upon demotion within any county government department, a permanent status employee who is required to complete a new probationary period, and who has received an overall job performance rating of at least "Meets Standards", shall be eligible to receive a merit increase July 1.

L. Use of Evaluations

Results of performance evaluations may be used as a basis for determining training, awards, merit pay, reassignment, promotion, transfer, reduction in grade, retention and termination of employees.

M. Records

1. Completed performance evaluation forms shall be maintained in employee personnel files located in the Department of Human Resources. If used, self-evaluation forms shall not to be included in the employee personnel file.
2. All completed Fauquier County employee performance evaluation forms are confidential and shall only be made available to:
 - a. the employee evaluated;
 - b. an individual or representative for whom the employee has provided a written statement of release of information;
 - c. the employee's chain of supervision (evaluator, supervisors and the Department Head/Constitutional Officer);
 - d. the County Administrator or designated representative;
 - e. a supervisor who is considering accepting the employee for a promotion/transfer;
 - f. the Director of Human Resources, or designated representative.

N. Training

The Human Resources Department shall be responsible for the facilitation of performance evaluation training.

O. Program Evaluation

Periodic evaluation of the effectiveness of the general government performance evaluation system will be conducted to determine whether it meets the needs of the organization, management and employees, and whether it complies with pertinent laws and regulations. As a result of the program evaluation, action will be taken as necessary to refine, alter, or otherwise improve the system. Copies of such evaluation reports will be available for review by all employees, supervisors and officials of the general government.

P. Compliance with Equal Employment Opportunity Guidelines

Performance evaluations may be used as factors in decisions of employee pay,

training, awards, promotion, demotion, transfer, suspension, and/or termination. Accordingly, the employee performance evaluation system shall comply with applicable equal employment opportunity guidelines. Discrimination based on race, color, creed, political or religious affiliation or opinion, age, handicap, national origin, sex, marital status, pregnancy, or any other non-merit factor is prohibited in the evaluation of employee work performance.